

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image ordering system comprising a center server,
a first client computer for an orderer and a second
client computer for a laboratory that are capable of
5 communicating data with one another;

said first client computer including:

an input unit for inputting data that
specifies an image to be printed; and

- 10 a first transmitting unit for transmitting, to
said center server, the image specifying data that is
input from said input unit and data specifying the
orderer;

said center server including:

- 15 a first receiving unit for receiving the image
specifying data and the orderer specifying data
transmitted from said first transmitting unit of said
first client computer; and

- 20 a second transmitting unit for transmitting
the image specifying data and the orderer specifying
data, which has been received by said first receiving
unit, to said second client computer in association with
each other; and

said second client computer including:

- 25 a second receiving unit for receiving the
image specifying data and the orderer specifying data
transmitted from said second transmitting unit of said
center server; and

a first alerting unit for giving notice of

information regarding an image specified by the image specifying data and of an orderer represented by the orderer specifying data, which items of data have been received by said second receiving unit.

- 5 2. The system according to claim 1, wherein said system has a plurality of said second client computers;

 said center server stores correspondence data in advance, the correspondence data representing with which second client computer among the plurality thereof the

- 10 first client computer of the orderer is affiliated;

 said center server further including:

 a determination unit for determining, on the basis of the correspondence data, with which second client computer, among the plurality thereof, the

- 15 orderer specified by the orderer data received by said first receiving unit is affiliated; and

 a transmit controller for controlling said second transmitting unit so as to transmit the image data and the orderer specifying data to said second
20 client computer that has been determined by said determination unit.

3. The system according to claim 1, wherein said center server further includes an image database storing image data; and

- 25 said first client computer includes a display controller for displaying, on a display unit, a thumbnail image of an image represented by image data that has been stored in said image database of said

4. The system according to claim 1, wherein said center server further includes:

5 specifying data received by said first receiving unit,
calculates an estimate of a printing fee for printing an
image specified by the image specifying data; and

a third transmitting unit for transmitting, to said first client computer, data representing the estimate
10 calculated by said calculation unit; and

said first client computer further includes:

a third receiving unit for receiving the estimate data transmitted from said third transmitting unit of said center server; and

15 a second alerting unit for giving notice of the estimate represented by the estimate data received by said third receiving unit.

5. The system according to claim 1, wherein said center server further includes:

20 a calculation unit for calculating a printing fee
for printing the image; and

a fifth transmitting unit for transmitting data representing the fee calculated by said calculation unit to at least one of said first and second client computers;

at least one of said first and second client
computers further including:

a fifth receiving unit for receiving fee data

a second alerting unit for giving notice of the fee represented by the fee data received by said fifth receiving unit.

a sixth receiving unit for receiving fee data transmitted from said fifth transmitting unit of said center server; and

15 said fifth transmitting unit of said center server
transmitting data representing the fee calculated by
said fee calculation unit to said first client computer
after it transmits this data to said second client
computer.

said fifth transmitting unit transmitting fee data
of orderers affiliated with said second client
computers.

laboratories affiliated with the agencies and
orderers affiliated with the laboratories each being

decided; and

said fifth transmitting unit transmitting fee data to the third client computer of a corresponding agency, to said second client computer of the laboratory and to
5 said first client computer of the orderer.

9. The system according to claim 8, wherein said fifth transmitting unit of said center server transmits the fee data to the second client computer of the laboratory after it transmits it to the third client computer of
10 the agency;

said third client computer of the agency including:

a first verification unit for verifying a fee represented by fee data transmitted from said fifth transmitting unit of said center server; and

15 a sixth transmitting unit for transmitting verification data to said center server in response to verification performed by said verification unit;

said center server further including a seventh receiving unit for receiving verification data
20 transmitted from said third client computer of the agency; and

said fifth transmitting unit transmitting the fee data to said second client computer of the laboratory in response to reception of the verification data by said
25 seventh receiving unit.

10. The system according to claim 8, wherein said fifth transmitting unit of said center server transmits the fee data to the first client computer of the orderer

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said second client computer of the laboratory
further including:

5 a second verification unit for verifying a fee
represented by fee data transmitted from said fifth
transmitting unit of said center server; and

a seventh transmitting unit for transmitting verification data to said center server in response to verification performed by said second verification unit;

said center server having an eighth receiving unit for receiving verification data transmitted from said second client computer of the laboratory;

said fifth transmitting unit transmitting the fee
15 data to said first client computer of the orderer in
response to reception of the verification data by said
eighth receiving unit.

11. The system according to claim 1, wherein a third client computer for an agency is provided, said third client computer including:

a first setting unit for setting at least one of a laboratory affiliated with an agency and an orderer affiliated with a laboratory; and

an eighth transmitting unit for transmitting
25 attribute data, which has been set by said first setting
unit, to said center server.

12. The system according to claim 1, wherein said client computer for laboratory further includes:

a ninth transmitting unit for transmitting attribute data, which has been set by said second setting unit, to said center server.

10 a third setting unit for setting a service, from
among a plurality of services, that can be utilized by
the orderer; and

14. A center server comprising:

20 a transmitting unit for transmitting the image
specifying data and the orderer specifying data, which
has been received by said receiving unit, to a client
computer for a laboratory in association with each
other.

a receiving device for receiving data specifying an image and orderer specifying data transmitted from a center server;

a printer controller for controlling a printer so as to print the image represented by the received image data; and

an alerting unit for giving notice of an orderer
5 specified by the received orderer specifying data.

16. In an image ordering system comprising a center server, a first client computer for an orderer and a second client computer for a laboratory that are capable of communicating data with one another, an image
10 ordering method comprising the following steps implemented by said first client computer:

inputting data that specifies an image to be printed; and

transmitting, to said center server, the image
15 specifying data that is input and data specifying the orderer;

the following steps implemented by said center server:

receiving the image specifying data and the orderer
20 specifying data transmitted from said first client computer; and

transmitting the received image specifying data and orderer specifying data to said second client computer in association with each other; and

25 the following steps implemented by said second client computer:

receiving the image specifying data and the orderer specifying data transmitted from said center server; and

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giving notice of information regarding an image specified by the received image specifying data and of an orderer represented by the received orderer specifying data.

- 5 17. A method of controlling operation of a center
server, comprising the steps of:

receiving data specifying an image and data specifying an orderer transmitted from a first client computer of the orderer; and

- 10 transmitting the received image specifying data and
orderer specifying data to a second client computer for
a laboratory in association with each other.

18. A method of controlling operation of a client computer for a laboratory, comprising the steps of:

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15 receiving data specifying an image and orderer
 specifying data transmitted from a center server;

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controlling a printer so as to print the image represented by the received image data; and

- giving notice of an orderer specified by the  
20 received orderer specifying data.